

first name basis, we will have a chance to have communications in a more friendlier, relaxed atmosphere, as opposed to a conversation during the height of a crime or a criminal investigation.

Because when I pull up in my squad car they would not know who I was, and I did not know who they were, so two strangers or three or four strangers were supposed to solve a crime. But if we have three or four friends trying to solve a crime, the results are much greater.

Mr. Speaker, that is why community policing is such a valuable tool. It has been around for a few years. What has always kept policing down is the cost. It is expensive to assign a police officer to a couple of townships, and he takes his car home with him every night. It is not parked at the station.

He has certain needs which require a little bit more than probably a police officer who switches cars at every shift, and trades off with equipment, because each individual is a police officer and almost a police station in and of himself. His office is his home or his office is his car or her car. It requires a degree of help. What this program offers them is, we will make a 3-year commitment if they will commit to a community policing program that will work in their communities.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, the other thing that is interesting, and I thank the gentleman, when we had the crime debate in August just before the recess, it became frustrating for me listening to the rhetoric of many Members of Congress who had never been in a district attorney's office, had never been police officers, and really had very little experience, real life experience, in crime, in fighting crime.

I challenge Members of Congress to take some time during their recess to go into a district attorney's office and volunteer, whether it be volunteer to work with attorneys on cases, whether it be to volunteer with victim witness advocates, who have to take the victims of crime and let them know what their rights are and help them through the criminal justice process, which is so intimidating to many victims, particularly victims of domestic violence, who really are victims twice, once to the original abuse, and twice when they have to go through a court system that frankly is not equipped to deal with the devastating problem that is permeating American society.

But I challenge Members, and I have talked to Members to see whether any had the time to go into a district attorney's office, or to go into a police department and learn what the front lines of the fight against crime is really all about. I cannot help but believe if more Members had been willing to do that, to really find out what is happening in district attorney's offices across this country, in attorney generals' offices across this country, in police departments, whether they be urban police departments, whether they be county police departments or suburban

or rural police departments, it would certainly help the tenor of the debate here if we can begin to debate real, professional crime tactics, real, professional crime opportunities that we have around this country, rather than to listen to the bantering back and forth based on, as I say, a focus group, a political poll, what sounds good, what might make the President look bad, what they might be able to embarrass the Attorney General with, partisan politics, back and forth.

It is amazing. This is not a partisan issue; this is serious business. I feel very strongly that efforts to kill this community policing program are not in the interests of the communities that we represent, the communities clear across America.

It is really important that we stay the course and let this program work. Four months, 4 months, and we are talking about dismantling a program that I have shown very persuasive evidence tonight that is working, not only in Lowell, MA. It is working all over the country.

To take partisan politics to defeat this is something that disturbs me greatly. I hope that the debate on this will be a debate based on the merits of the argument. I oftentimes would break with my own party's leadership in the last 2 years, and boy, oh, boy, talk about party discipline this year, march step-by-step, go to the left, go to the right.

I hope that we can have a legitimate debate about the community policing program in this country, because it would be great for America, it would be great for law enforcement in this country, and I think in the long run it would dramatically increase standards of living by lowering the crime rate all over this country.

I thank the gentleman for his efforts on the Crime Task Force. I look forward to working with him over the next several days, and well into next week. I don't know how long we will get to debate the community policing program. It seems we are going to spend more time up front debating the first few days of the various victims' issues, which I think there is a broad agreement on.

There is nothing wrong with, as I say, making minor adjustments to the bill. We spent half a day, three-quarters of a day, debating something that we all agree on, that we all agree on, but it seems when we get down to the end of this debate on community policing and prevention programs that are working, it looks like we are going to be a little squeezed for time, because we are going to be running out of time. I am not sure whose birthday it is, but we have to get it done on Tuesday, so there is not going to be a whole lot of time.

I would hope that we could get a discussion based on the merits of the arguments over the next few days, and your experience as a police officer for 12 years has been invaluable to our task force, invaluable to the Members

of Congress who are looking at this issue objectively, trying to find professional solutions to what many Americans feel is the No. 1 problem facing this country, crime.

So thank you for your efforts, and thank you for putting together this special order. I look forward to working with you.

Mr. STUPAK. I thank the gentleman for not only joining me tonight, but also last night, along with the gentleman from California [Mr. FILNER], the gentleman from Texas [Mr. CHAPMAN], and others who came out.

The purpose for doing these special orders or 5 minutes, as you can see, the Chamber is practically empty, is for the benefit of our viewing audience. It is our hope that they will call their Members and urge them to support the community policing program.

This debate will probably start, I think, Thursday, and then go into Friday and possibly Monday.

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So time is of the essence. We are on this fast track legislation.

Many people throughout my district, and as I speak out more and more on community policing and 1,000 police officers, the cops on the street program, most people are not aware that the proposal that will be presented later this week is to kill this program, so we need help from the public to call their Representative and tell them to keep this program, keep the police officers on the street. We need police. We need prevention and not just the prisons and pork that are going to be offered by the other side.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on my special order of today, a tribute to Ronald Reagan.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. (Mr. HANSEN). Is there objection the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

A TRIBUTE TO RONALD REAGAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from New York, [Mr. SOLOMON] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I take this special order tonight to pay tribute to a great American, the greatest American that I have ever known, and that is President Ronald Reagan. As you know, I had intended to hold this event last night as a birthday present for the former President, but the House was occupied on an even better birthday present, passage of the line item veto. And what better birthday present